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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 001482

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/15/2013
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PK](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: KARZAI THREATENS PAKISTAN AND MEANS IT

Classified By: CDA Christopher Dell for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C//REL UK, CAN) Summary: A Palace advisor implied Karzai would not retract his June 16 threat to strike at insurgents harboring in Afghanistan. The MFA said Karzai had not directed his threat against Pakistan's sovereignty or territorial integrity, but against the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) for its support of the insurgency. Karzai is pleased by the popular approval his bellicosity generated. More thoughtful Afghans condemn him as irresponsible. They fear an adverse reaction from Pakistan, upon which Afghans depend increasingly for food and fuel. We will remind Karzai he has a lot to lose by provoking Pakistan's anger. The new civilian Pakistani government may attenuate much of Karza's anger by following up on its early overtures to the IROA with concrete steps. End Sumary.

12. (C//REL CAN, UK) Afghan National Security Council Policy Advisor Daoud Yaqub (Protect; AMCIT) told us June 16 Karzai "meant ever word" of his previous day's press conference threat to strike at insurgents harboring in Pakistan. "This wasn't emotion or an attempt to deflect attention from Kandahar (the June 13 prison outbreak) or an election gambit," Daoud said. "The President genuinely feels this way and has so for a long time." Daoud added Karzai intended his message not just for the Pakistani government, but for the international community. "We're tired of foot-dragging. Karzai has lost his patience." Afghans are dying, he implied, because the international community is reluctant to take the fight to the source of the problem, the terrorists' sanctuaries inside Pakistan. When reminded that the Afghan military lacks the ability to project power on its own into neighboring countries, Daoud replied Pakistan's Baluch separatists had been seeking official sanction for safe havens inside of Afghanistan. "We are not without options," he hinted.

13. (C//REL ISAF) In a separate conversation, MFA First Political Department (Pakistan affairs) Director Abdul Samad strove for nuance, telling u Karzai intended no threat to Pakistani sovereignty or territorial integrity. The president, he said, was challenging the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) "and those entities, operating beyond government control, that support the insurgents." He confirmed the Pakistani MFA's June 16 convoking of the Afghan ambassador and said the Pakistani charge had urgently requested a June 17 appointment at the

ministry.

¶4. (C//REL UK, CAN) Daoud reported Karzai is pleased with the reaction his threat is generating among Afghans. "We assess it as 95% positive," he said. "We regret (Gulbuddin) Hekmatyar broke off negotiations with us (because of Karzai's press conference), but he probably only did so under Pakistani pressure." Daoud interpreted a statement he attributed to POTUS during his June 16 press conference in the UK as supportive of Karzai's bellicosity towards Pakistan.

¶5. (SBU) Our observations from the Afghan street recorded widespread emotional support for an aggressive stance towards Pakistan. We have received reports of public demonstrations by Afghan Pashtuns encouraging Karzai's high-profile willingness to challenge perceived Pakistani government manipulation of its own Pashtun population.

¶6. (SBU) More thoughtful commentators condemned Karzai's statements as irresponsible. Noting Afghanistan's dependence on its neighbors for food and fuel, they worried Pakistan might react by closing its borders. Opposition United Front spokesman Sangcharaki dismissed Karzai's threats as posturing that would do nothing to stem the erosion of the president's authority and credibility. Kandahari MP Haji Habibullah Jan lamented Karzai's bellicosity, saying it would reduce Pakistan's incentive to cooperate with Afghanistan against terrorism. A second Kandahari MP, Mohammad Omar Shirzad, said Karzai's Paris conference success had made him arrogant and intemperate. Like Jan, Shirzad fears Karzai's statement was a mistake that could stymie efforts to coordinate Pakistani and Afghan efforts against their common enemy.

¶7. (C//REL ISAF) Comment: With his eye on the 2009 elections and mindful of his need to shore up his flagging popularity Karzai shamelessly pitched this one to the groundlings. Nevertheless, he is incensed by the recent Waziristan agreements and remains unshakeable in his belief - expressed many times to high-level USG visitors - that ISI is a rogue agency that the government must bring to heel. The GOP might successfully deflate some of Karzai's emotions if it follows up on its earlier overtures by expediting exports of wheat to Afghanistan, manning Border Control Centers and naming its 25-person Peace Jirga implementation delegation. We would use such gestures to get him refocused on the positive, reminding him that he has much to gain by building on recent momentum with Islamabad and that his land-locked country cannot afford poor relations with its principle artery to the world.

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